

Memorable 15th June

15th June '79 was a turning point in the history of democratic mass movement of our country. It heralded in a mighty way the beginning of the end of social democratic treachery and along with it the evil designs of the bourgeoisie that are causing depredations in the life of the toiling people in all its aspects. People were groaning under the grinding wheel of capitalist exploitation-phenomenal price rise, acute power crisis, anti-people education policy etc. all making their life miserable. Yet there was no protest, no movement. It seemed as if worst kind of slavery to savage exploitation of capital was people's lot and that it could not be changed. But this could not be true. It would mean denial of the lessons of history. On 15th of June rose the titan of people's indomitable struggling spirit.

On that day, nearly a lakh of toiling people from different walks of life trekking, all the way from distant villages and industrial centres formed a mighty and roaring sea of protest in the city of Calcutta against the savage exploitation of capital and social democratic deceptions. The puny figures in the political scene who were fretting and fuming all the time asking the exploited to obey the 'law and order' saw to their dismay that people put them to ridicule by breaking the 'law' that defends the exploiters and the 'order' that had become the seat of gravest injustice. It was a massive civil disobedience movement, organised by our Party, SUCI.

It is to be remembered that in West Bengal, a tradition of mass struggle was built up by united mass movements, since Independence, unitedly by the left parties along with our party. But the CPI(M) and its allies who were once the forces of struggle are positively working against mass struggle. Again, in the past the united left movement was directed against the discredited political force like the Congress. The movement unleashed on 15th June was organised however by the single handed initiative of our party unlike on previous occasions. Moreover, although the ruling parties in West Bengal were fast losing the confidence of the masses, because of their anti-people policies and activities, its grip over the masses was still not entirely loosened like that of the Congress.

The immensity of the task can therefore easily be imagined. Yet 15th June made it possible.

It showed how correct was the reading of our party leadership that 'people want movement'; what was lacking was 'proper guidance and leadership' to give a proper outlet to their feelings and earnest desire. 15th June fulfilled that task of the hour. Herein lies the political significance of 15th June.

The panicky politicians who were in their dream-land, thinking that they by their acts of treachery and dope of reformism had already lulled the oppressed to submission, rudely shocked at this audacity expressed their spite and anger by bringing down police brutalities. They, thus followed the footsteps of their predecessors who also served the same master, the bourgeoisie. They themselves, by their very act, scoffed at their own claim of ensuring democratic freedom of organising legitimate mass movements. They showed, equally like their predecessors, the fear about democratic mass movements against the ruling capitalist class. Unmasking themselves by concrete deeds, they showed that they were no better than the autocrats who had come and disappeared, like the players, trutting and fretting their hours upon the political stage. Social-democracy was at its worst discomfiture faced with the dare and revolutionary determination of the toiling people of the land led by their revolutionary party—SUCI.

(Contd. to page 4)

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Come forward to solve Assam problem with unbiased mind

SUCI's Appeal

The unilaterally adopted programme of identifying foreign nationals and forcefully driving them out by the secessionist forces of Assam has now created a very serious and dangerous situation. As a result of this, not only tremendous hardships and miseries will befall the lives of thousands and thousands of helpless and innocent, it is bound to lead to fratricidal strifes between different sections of the people and will thus cause tremendous damage to their struggle for emancipation. So, it is most incumbent upon all right thinking democratic minded people of all the states of India as well as of Assam in particular to come forward and resist this.

The present situation of Assam did not develop overnight. The thirty years of Congress rule, two and a half years of Janata rule and the rule of the present Indira Government at the Centre and the Assam Government under President's rule are entirely responsible for this. These parties of the bourgeoisie have for long actively helped to create and further develop parochial and fissiparous tendencies to weaken the legitimate democratic movements of the exploited masses by creating cleavage in the unity of the toiling people. A little careful study of the activities of the Indira Government will also reveal this truth.

The two main issues that are agitating the minds of the people of Assamese nationality are preservation and development of their language, education and culture and the economic development of the state. No democratic minded people can reject the justness of these demands. And the responsibility for fulfillment of these two demands lies entirely with the Central Government. But since the agitation started, not at any stage did the Indira Government at the Centre take note of the gravity of the situation and adopt proper and sincere steps for the just solution of this problem. On the contrary by dilly dallying, they have in reality helped the parochial and secessionist tendencies there to gain ground. Not only that, they have, in reality, by active co-operation from party forum and the administration fomented the parochial and secessionist sentiments. But they have all through maintained a show of conciliatory efforts so that people cannot realise their evil design. Had they truly wanted a solution of the Assam problem, they would have tried sincerely to remove the strong apprehension of the Assamese people on the question of preservation of their language, education and culture, if necessary by constitutional guarantee. A concrete

proposal on this line was placed at the Delhi talk by our party. But Indira Gandhi did not move in that direction. Further, Indira Gandhi who at the time of elections can undertake hurricane, whirlwind tours throughout the country did not get time to visit Assam for more than once in the last four months despite the situation having taken such a dangerous drift. It is because of attitude and activities of the Indira Government that the reactionary secessionist forces could confuse the people of Assamese nationality in such fearful magnitude. For, Indira Gandhi knows it well that in order to save the capitalist set up from the accumulated wrath of the people due to the all-embracing acute crisis in their life and to lead the country to fascism the unity of the people must be shattered by inciting fissiparous and parochial sentiments so that they cannot develop a united mass struggle. As they did in Assam, so also they tried to confuse the people and incite parochial sentiments through their shrewd manoeuvre of blockade movement in West Bengal too.

In such a situation, it was the bounden duty of all left and democratic forces to expose the trickeries of the Indira Government to the people

(Contd. to Page 4)

DEVELOPMENTS IN IRAN

That, a mighty struggle with immense revolutionary possibilities may reach a tragic end for want of revolutionary leadership despite all the toil and blood of the people and their tremendous sacrifice and dedication, is confirmed once again in Iran.

Background of the Movement

The Iranian people, had all the ingredients, to speak the truth, to build a revolutionary struggle; but the leadership which was in the hands of the moderate bourgeoisie with a religious zealot like Ayatullah Khomeini, projected as the Father figure of the movement betrayed them; and the historic opportunity of bringing about a revolutionary transformation of the country, which was their own creation, slipped out of their hands to the bourgeoisie.

After analysing the various aspects of the historic struggle of the Iranian people, we could apprehend this danger earlier and so in our previous article on Iran (Iran—a political study, Proletarian Era 1.2. 1979) we observed: "The people are in great expectation for a new and freer life but behind the scene the historical forces must be working. The bourgeoisie will strike a deal with the imperialists and superpowers for a bigger share in exploiting the people although pretending to keep promises to them. The working class of Iran must also seize the moment in their favour to fulfil the unfinished tasks of democratic revolution fully and thoroughly as a first step towards the goal which cannot be other than scientific socialism in the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution. For this they want a political leadership of their own which they sadly miss even now. There is therefore the danger of the historic opportunity, their own creation, slipping out of their hands to the national bourgeoisie."

It may be recalled that the movement which many consider to be one of the mightiest people's upsurges of the seventies witnessed by the world people

was primarily initiated by the fighting workers, students and youth.

The lead was given by the oil workers, joined in by the workers of banks, industries and other undertakings. The fighting students who in all countries always play a pioneering role in struggles against oppression, exploitation and tyranny came out of the universities and colleges and joined in the movement in thousands. Soon lakhs of people participated in the movement defying all oppressive measures. It took the form of a national upsurge against the tyrannical rule of the Shah and ultimately forced him to flee the country which he and his predecessors ruled for long years.

The Iranian bourgeoisie, who, seizing the opportunity of the absence of a genuine working class leadership usurped the leadership of the movement from the very beginning, was very cautious and careful regarding the object and course of the struggle.

From the very beginning they tried to confine the movement with their anticipatory moves with the object of consolidating their class rule in the country.

Bourgeoisie's attempts to channelise the movement to petty reforms

So they were only after some petty reforms here and there and for this they tried many a time to come to terms with the Shah.

In the beginning they were not in favour of the demand for the abdication of the Shah. The reason was very clear. Though they, at times, being inspired by their national bourgeois class outlook and interest criticised the Shah's policy of giving practically unfettered rights to the foreign

powers to export the oil of the country, still the Shah was their own spokesman and it was they who were greatly benefited from the Shah's moves towards modernisation and the limited reforms that he introduced in agrarian and other fields.

But when the demand for the abdication of the Shah came out of the mighty movement they thought it wise to sacrifice him to their class interest and consolidated all their efforts to channelise the movement in the direction of firmly establishing their class rule in the country in the form of a constitutional republic in place of the former monarchy.

Though they succeeded in their bid, all along, the bourgeoisie who were suffering from the fear complex of revolution were apprehensive of the way the movement was developing in dimension and intensity. Their main apprehension was that with the growth of momentum, the movement might go out of their control to the hands of the 'lefts' which they thought were gaining ground. So their sole object was to check the movement and counter the growth of the forces known as 'lefts'.

Apart from directing the rightist forces to lead brutal physical attacks on the supporters of the 'leftwing' movement so as to wipe them out from the college and university campus, they, took recourse to heinous conspiratorial designs that benefited only the most reactionary and clever bourgeoisie.

With the object of arresting the growth of the democratic thoughts, ethics and values which were congenial to the growth of the 'leftist' movement, they started patronising all the variants of orthodox, fanatic obscurantist forces such as the Muslim Fundamentalists and others of the similar kind.

Traditional religious values have still their grip over the society

It is a fact that these forces have much influence on a large section of the people.

Iran is a backward country where the cultural tasks of democratic revolution were yet to be fulfilled. The Shah's limited attempts at modernisation were only aimed at providing some amenities of modern western livelihood and that too to the upper strata of the society. It could not and so did not bring about any progressive change in the life of the people as a whole on the questions of culture, ethics, and values of life which still were dominated by orthodox religious codes. Even if there was any cultural movement based on scientific and secular outlook it was too weak to create any appreciable impression on the socio-cultural horizon of the country.

It was this weakness that the religious fanatic forces fully took advantage of and with success still kept a large section of the people within their fold.

This apart, there is other reason too, behind the existing dominating influence of these forces over a section of the people.

The western style of livelihood brought the western decadent bourgeois culture with it which was gradually permeating the society through and through. The reaction that this decadent Yankee culture generated within the society still carrying traditional religious values, also to a great extent helped this orthodox fanatic forces to create increasing influence over the people.

Progressive movement must encompass cultural field for higher proletarian ethics and values to gain ground

At present, on the one hand this Yankee culture and on the other hand all the variants of orthodoxy,

obscurantism, fanaticism etc.—both of course are serving the class purpose of the bourgeoisie.

Now any one conversant with the history of the struggle of the Iranian people knows it well that these forces had some traditional conflicts with the Shah and that they were very much opposed to the latter's attempts at modernisation.

At the initial stage of the movement, though they were in it, they did not play any remarkable role. But at a later stage, mostly being encouraged and patronised by the bourgeoisie, they gradually came to the forefront of the struggle and thus served as a powerful instrument in the hand of the bourgeoisie to contain the possible growth of the 'leftists' in the movement. And lastly to check the movement, and counter the growth of the 'leftists' they called in Ayatullah Khomeini, who had a tremendous influence over the people of a country where to many, religious orthodoxy and conservatism could still be employed as a substitute for freedom and projected him as the Father figure of the movement.

And with plenty of militant postures and gimmicks that he exercised for absorbing the militant tone of the movement, Khomeini nicely discharged the responsibility that the bourgeois leadership entrusted upon him.

Now after achieving an initial success in their mission, the sole object of the Iranian bourgeoisie was to stabilise their class rule in the country.

So, they took recourse to such tactics which on the one hand would divert the attention of the people from the main object of their struggle and on the other would provide them with scope to earn dividend as much as possible by bargaining with both the superpowers. A critical analysis of the later events and more so their way of tackling the hostage issue would no doubt expose this game.

It is known to all that just before Khomeini (Contd. to page 3)

(Contd. from page 2)
accepted the resignation of Mr. Bazargan, the erstwhile Premier of the country and ordered the revolutionary council to take over the administration of the country, the fighting militant students occupied the US embassy in Teheran and took forty nine hostages demanding that the USA must extradite the Shah and hand over to Iran the former monarch's entire assets in USA.

Mr. Carter in his bid to pose himself as a strong man before the American people on the eve of the presidential election took recourse to various steps and measures to free the hostages. His attempts among others included, imposing formal embargo on trade, freezing of six billion pounds of Iranian gold and other holdings in the US banks, seeking of active assistance of the UN council to free the hostages, attack on the Iranian border by the US directed Iraq, performance of a drama of commando-raid etc. etc. Failing in his bid Mr. Carter as a last resort called on friends and allies of EEC for moral and practical support and appealed to them to enforce economic sanctions against Iran.

The reaction in Western Europe at first had been cautious bordering on the lukewarm. The reason was obvious. Most of the West European countries and particularly the nine nation EEC (European Economic Community) developed increasingly profitable trade links with Iran. Moreover some of the key West European countries, namely West Germany, France and Italy, were to a considerable extent, dependent on Iranian oil. And Britain too, though she was not dependent on Iranian oil had to think twice as any such move was bound to stand in the way of her existing profitable export trade with Iran and thereby affect her troubled industry. There was of course other reason too behind their hesitation. Some of them were contenders to the US on the question of

Oppositional-reformist role of Iranian bourgeoisie uses the hostage issue as a lever of pressure against US imperialism

getting share of Iranian oil. So they could not take the risk of straining their relation with Iran by giving support to the US in the said conflict between the two countries.

Lastly of course, on repeated request from President Carter they have finally decided to enforce economic sanctions against Iran. But the decisions taken with utmost reluctance at the EEC Foreign Ministers' Conference is considered by the Ministers themselves as fruitless gesture having little or no prospect at all of Iran succumbing to the pressure to release the hostages.

Oil interest of the US and its gambits

What ever efforts Mr. Carter may further undertake to free the hostages, it is however clear from US attitude and activities that what is of paramount importance to the US is not the hostages but the Iranian oil and to protect the same, if necessary they are ready to sacrifice the forty-nine Americans and the Shah at the altar of the overriding interests of either.

Since Dr. Mussadeq's overthrow, during the hated rule of the Shah, the US imperialists have been enjoying practically unfettered right to exploit the oil resources of the country.

Following an agreement signed in 1954, the National Iranian Oil Company which was created by Dr. Mussadeq, remained the sole owner of all oil fields and the refinery whereas the US controlled consortium became the buyer of oil. But soon through the exclusive control of the market, the said consortium became the defacto masters of all oil production, the legal position notwithstanding. These companies for their own interest, through a clan-

destine understanding between themselves restricted production and upliftment of oil in Iran. Since oil was the main source of capital formation in the country, these sought to limit its progress.

This for obvious reason gave birth to a strong anti-US reaction within the country. Even the Shah who betrayed the aspiration of the people by joining hands with the US interests, being pressurised by internal demands had to move for fresh agreements for new concessions with Italian and Japanese companies—the terms of contact being much more favourable to Iran than the fifty-fifty allowed by the US Consortium. There was therefore a drift in oil operations away from the Consortium, towards the non-Consortium Companies. The aggrieved companies of the Consortium were craving for diplomatic intervention on the part of USA. So while the events of early Fifties during the period of Mussadeq had flown out of US desire to share Iranian oil, the later events of the Seventies have manifested their utmost desire to protect and sustain their oil interests. Apart from oil the US has to protect other interests too in Iran. The Shah's rabid anti-communism and staunch anti-people class outlook made him close to the US imperialist thereby giving them scope to more and more penetrate and extend their influence in a country with so much of geopolitical importance like Iran.

In his bid to perpetrate a tyrannical rule in the country the Shah sought help from the US imperialists to establish a strong intelligence cum espionage and defense framework within the country. So what the Shah achieved during his long 35 years of hated rule was a military state equipped with most

modern US and British arms and a savage police system Savak which was built up by Pentagon and CIA trained American generals. The close relation and co-operation that once existed between the Shah and the US was glaringly manifested in the enactment of two Bills by the Iranian Majlis, among others. One of the Acts granted diplomatic immunity to the US military personnels, putting soldiers who committed crimes in the country beyond reach of the law of land. The other empowered the government to accept the US loan to buy US military hardware. And as a result of this particular Act during the rule of the Shah, soon Iran became dumping ground of sophisticated military hardwares of US military industries.

'Besides these the US has the political interest of using the geopolitical position of Iran in the Middle East, as a strong base against the Arab nationalist movement and the growth of Soviet hegemonism in the neighbouring area. Iran has also been used as US base for intelligence equipment to monitor Soviet nuclear testing to verify whether it conforms to Salt II agreement.' So, when the anti-Shah movement rose to a peak the US for obvious reason in spite of their relation with the Shah they refused to stake their interest for an individual. They thought it wise to advice the Savak and the armed forces under the influence of CIA and the American generals to keep neutral during the upsurge. This fact received confirmation also from the Shah's own observation during the turmoil.

Moreover reports were there that they maintained a close contact with the different sections of the moderate bourgeoisie represented by Shahpur Baktier, Ghotbzadeh. They even tried to develop

contact with Ayatullah Khomeini, posed as the philosopher and guide of the Iranian bourgeoisie when he was in Paris.

Even now the US and the moderate bourgeoisie of Iran have between themselves a close bond and understanding based on common capitalist class interest which both sides for obvious reason desire to protect.

It is for this reason that we see that lest excessive strain develops in their relation with the US, the President Mr. Bani Sadr and many of his colleagues both in the government and the Revolutionary Council all along, are in favour of persuing a soft line on the hostages. He considered this holding of hostages a "useless game" and while commenting on the action of the students holding hostages he observed that the role of the students were not to take decisions but to obey.

Moreover in an editorial of the Islamic Revolution, which he himself publishes, he warned, "In our campaign against the US, the hostages are our weaknesses, not our strength..." Real independence from the US, he continued, "requires far more than holding a few hostages and wrangling among ourselves about who should have custody over them."

Even reports were there claiming that once Bani Sadr moved ahead to reach a tentative agreement with Mr. Carter, under which the latter would confess to past offences in Iran, promise not to interfere again, help Iran recover the funds removed by the Shah and refrain from opposing Iran's efforts to force his extradition from Panama. But feeling a strong public reaction against such a move, he took to his heels.

Such an attitude is however quite in conformity with their class character in the existing period of moribund capitalism when the bourgeoisie has become out and out reactionary, reformist oppositional and

(Contd. to page 6)

Memorable 15th June

(Contd. From Page 1)

15th June is a memorable day. It will be remembered on two counts. First, never before in our country such vast number of people rallied behind the single flag of a party did participate in a mass movement since Independence. Calcutta the city of militant mass struggles has witnessed many such struggles, all organised jointly by many parties but never before, it saw such vastness, such high sense of discipline and purposiveness. The provocation was of worst kind—even police vehicles ran through the gathering, but to the dismay of those who thought of otherwise, the people stood the test with rare courage, fortitude and boldness. The barbarity thus laid bare in its naked ugliness stupified even those in power. They dared not issue a story in the shape of a press note that usually follows such acts of barbarities.

15th June will also be remembered for it opened the path—path to the exploited, insulted and humiliated. When excruciating capitalist exploitation makes their life miserable, when a pall of gloom descends on the society, when the common people sorely disappointed for being let down by the parties who once talked loud about their cause and interest but now stand four square in defence of moribund capitalism and its crisis-ridden economy, its 'law and order', when they were finding no end of the dark tunnel of their miserable existence, 15th June came as a gush of fresh wind, as a harbinger of change, as a path finder. It came with the vibrant call of struggle—struggle to shake off their own despair and despondency in order to join the struggle to win their emancipation. No doubt the 'left front' tried to malign the movement on 15th June, tried to confuse the people by holding that as if the intention of the movement was to help the reactionary forces. Fact is however different. 15th June saved and defended the banner of left movement when it was thrown down by CPI(M) and its allies. People could not also be fooled. They wanted a genuine left force to come in the van of their movement. 15th June fulfilled that expectation of the people.

15th June awakend the soul of the toiling people with new hope and future. It brought home the truth that SUCI was the party that they were searching for so long. It is a party that has the revolutionary dare and dedication, a party wedded to no other cause than the cause of emancipation of the society and the people from the rottenness of this crisis-ridden capitalist social order. And here in lies the great divide between this revolutionary party of the Indian proletariat, founded and trained up by the great revolutionary thinker Comrade Shibdas Ghosh and all other social democratic parliamentary parties who talk of people's interest just to deceive the people and defend the crisis-discredited moribund capitalism. Long before, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh warned about these agents, the enemy capitalist class implants within the revolutionary movement of the toiling people to lead it astray and push it in disarray. 15th June proved this truth, once more in vivid colours.

Those who set the coercive apparatus of the bourgeois state machinery on the toiling people were pontificating that the path of movement was not 'strewn with flowers'. History has a queer sense of jesting and it was so. Those who usurped peoples' sacrifices and dedications in mass struggles to bargain for parliamentary career and privileges, were sermonising after committing the same crime against which they once pilloried their contestants in the game of parliamentary politics!

ASSAM PROBLEM

(Contd. from page 1) of all the left and democratic forces to (1) expose the trickeries of the Indira government to the people and build up a mighty movement against it to force a just solution to the Assam problem.

When such is the situation, it was the duty

Thus one by one, these defenders of moribund capitalism are showing their 'mettle' to their common master, the ruling bourgeois class from whom they all draw their political support and sustenance.

15th June stands witness to the sin, CPI(M) and its allies commit against people's cause and democratic mass movement. It proved beyond doubt that the path these parties had chosen is the path of the bourgeois parties. They have forsaken the path of struggle, the path people will take to reach their goal under the leadership of their revolutionary party SUCI.

15th June is the harbinger of change. People have been crying for change—change from this world of deception, mischief and degeneration. They were despairing in the absence of a political force that can storm the citadel of reaction. They were thinking of SUCI—the only party, the bourgeoisie has failed to lure away from the path of struggle and revolution to the degraded profession of parliamentary deceptive politics. Yet there was the lingering doubt about its capacity. Came 15th June and it swept it away like shifts in the wind. Yes it can. It is the party that alone can and will do what seems 'impossible' today.

15th June was the beginning. It was the forerunner to what is inexorably to come. For this singular reason, 15th June will remain as the Red Letter Day in the revolutionary movement of the Indian working people.

If you yearn for change, if you are impatient for the change, if you want to know how soon will come the change, 15th June will bring to your mind the answer, comrade Shibdas Ghosh has left to us:

"How soon will come the change—it all depends on you. How soon will come the revolution depends on how much time you will take to develop people's alternative political power in the concrete forms of revolutionary councils and people's committees like the Soviets by unitedly conducting movements organised on the concrete base political line of anti-capitalist Socialist Revolution and the correct ideology and leadership of the real revolutionary party of the proletariat....."

"Remember" Comrade Ghosh warned, "you can never achieve revolution through deception, through shouting of slogans, through tricks in ballot boxes".

The Central Committee of our party has called upon the people, to carry this behest of the great teacher of the proletariat. All over the country, wherever the party is working, 15th June will be remembered through various mass programme. When we observe this year '15th June Remembrance Day,' we do so to undertake the task with greater vigour of organising the toiling people on the correct base political line in mighty waves of mass movements against the evil design of the bourgeoisie to bring all out fascism, against the social democratic collaboration with that scheme, against the parochial and communal forces who are trying to break the unity of the working people and their class solidarity. And in our future struggles, harder at that, 15th June will ever remain as the symbol of hope, revolutionary initiative and determination.

Red Salute 15th June!

Assam problem. 2) isolate the parochial and divisive forces of the whole country including Assam by developing a strong public opinion against these forces and thus free the people of Assam from their influence and be on the alert that such forces cannot rear head in other states also. So, it is important that to resist parochial and divisive forces the direction of the movement must be against the Indira Government at the Centre for the main responsibility lies with it. Again, it is the policy of the Central Government that is responsible for the trouble the foreign agencies are trying to whip up taking advantage of the present situation. For, it is the Central Government that has created the present situation in Assam which is being exploited by the foreign forces. So, judging from all aspects, today's historic necessity was to develop a united movement against the Central Indira Government. But not taking this step, the CPI(M) leadership suddenly called a Bangla Bandh. They, thus, instead of developing a united left movement against the Central Government which was the urgent necessity, obstructed, in reality, the development of such a movement. On the other hand, the Indira Government which is responsible for the present situation of Assam and for which it should have been put on the dock and against whom the movement should have been directed through this programme of Bangla Bandh, that very Indira Government got a unique opportunity of extricating itself. And that is why the Indira Congress too lost no time to extend support to the Bangla Bandh. So, through this Bangla Bandh of 17th May the CPI(M) leadership objectively helped shield all the misdeeds of Indira Congress and save them from people's wrath by misdirecting the movement. Moreover, they helped in reality, the Congress(I) carry through with its evil design to weaken the mass move-

(Contd. to Page 7)

Mr. Jyoti Basu's angry outbursts

When a person loses reason you can expect anything but consistency. Mr. Jyoti Basu's remark against our party and his reactions to our party's approach on the vital question of power problem in the state, on the floor of West Bengal Assembly on 29th April, reminds one of this truth.

On that day, the Assembly was debating on the failure of the 'left front' government in the matter of resolving the acute power crisis even after its almost three years rule. Mr. Jyoti Basu besides being the Chief Minister is also the power minister. He struck a conciliatory note unlike on previous occasions in his introductory speech. Discretion being the better part of valour, Mr. Basu, perhaps thought that it was no use repeating promises for betterment of power supply or accusing his predecessor for the failure. He has done so umpteen times and people are already fed up with all these in nearly three years rule of the 'left front' government.

Mr. Basu was therefore confessing that he and his government could not gauge the dimension and complexity of the problems associated with present acute power crisis in the state and assured, as usual, of taking steps and measures to set the power plants in order and improving the condition of power supply.

The natural question that strikes one's mind is how come that it took nearly three years for Mr. Basu and his government to know that they had failed to gauge the very problems that were plaguing the power situation and have so to say, crippled the civic life? Mr. Basu is said to be a 'tough administrator.' But does this confession of failure to understand even the problems of a ministry which has been under his charge for about three years speak in favour of this reputation? Does it also speak of his concern for the people who have been subjected to untold sufferings due to steadily deteriorating power problems?

Again, it also logically follows from the same confession that whatever Mr. Basu and his ministry had done during this period believing that those would work, had been done purely on experimental basis or more correctly on the advice of the bureaucracy, without however making any effort to gauge the real nature and dimension of the problems. Had it been otherwise

then the steps he had taken would have yielded at least some results. But the real experience is different.

It may not be quite out of place to recall that besides sending more than thousand para - military forces "to teach a lesson" to the workers of the Santaldih power plant, Mr. Basu suffled the bureaucrats at the top administrative posts of his ministry and the State Electricity Board, planned bifurcation of the jobs of the Board into two separate agencies—one for generation and the other for distribution of electricity, imported a few gas turbines which would be solely dependent on supply of highspeed diesel, now in acute scarcity. But so far as toning up the administration, bringing cohesion and coordination between different categories of staff of plants and administration, breaking the evil chain of corruption between the contractors and top bureaucrats and last but not the least stopping distribution of largesse of overtime allowance in a bid to woo the support of workers by trade-union, led by ruling parties etc. are concerned, has any precious little been done? Mr. Basu may plead that he is unaware but is he unaware also of the fact that volumes of reports about all these have come out in the national dailies and different magazines?

That is why to any

unbiased mind, the most relevant question will be: is the government at all serious about solving the problems or if not solving the problems entirely within a short period, at least to ease them considerably to alleviate the sufferings of the people? If so, has the government, even now, grasped the entirety of the problems? Has it ever tried to know the real causes of this acute power crisis? If it claims that it knows the real causes then why it has not placed those before the people as also the steps it had taken to tackle those? Mr. Basu's confession of failure does not go to the length of giving a clear indication about these relevant issues.

Comrade Debaprosad Sarkar, our party leader in the West Bengal Assembly who spoke on the issue argued on the same line and urged upon Mr. Basu and his ministry to take the issue on 'war footing.' Reiterating the stand and approach of our party, Comrade Sarkar reminded the government that when frequent power cuts had posed serious threats to civic life so much so that emergency operations in hospitals and nursing homes were being held up, lakhs of workers were losing jobs and earnings, essential service like supply of drinking water was also being stopped, no government, if it bears minimum responsibility to the people could be expected to be a silent spectator. For this, our party has been consistently demanding that such a vital service like power supply should be kept above petty party sectarianism. In order to cope with the problems and plug the loopholes. What is therefore needed first, is to have an indepth and unbiased study of the real causes for such a mess in power front. Our party's suggestion to the government has therefore been to set up immediately a broad-based committee composed of representatives from political parties,

journalists and experts to go into the matter and place its findings and recommendations within a specified time. Mr. Basu and his government turned deaf ears to this suggestion in the past and did the same, this time also. But Mr. Basu was obviously enraged at the reiteration of that suggestion by Comrade Sarkar, on that day, on the floor of the Assembly.

In his pique, Mr. Basu said that our party, SUCI opposed when his government was taking 'disciplinary measures' against the power workers who had 'assaulted' an engineer at Santaldih and because of our party's opposition his government could not proceed. (reported in the Statesman on 30th April)

Was it therefore Mr. Basu's point that because his government could not take 'disciplinary measures' against the Santaldih power plant workers due to the opposition of our party, SUCI, that the power situation had deteriorated so much? Assuming that this was his point, was Mr. Basu telling the truth?

It is a fact that SUCI opposed the authoritarian measure of deployment of para-military forces to break the legitimate movement of power plant workers at Santaldih. Fact was that instead of bringing to book the erring engineer for whose grievous fault one worker got a hair-breadth escape from death, Mr. Basu made the manhandling of the said engineer a plea to break the union of his political opponent. And for this, not only the leaders and organisers of that union were chargesheeted, suspended and transferred and their vacancies were filled up by CITU-picked men, dubbed as 'task force' but a veritable reign of terror was let loose in and around the power plant by deployment of more than thousand para-military forces under the charge of an SP and Mr. Murshed was making frequent helicopter trips to oversee the 'Operation Santaldih'. Yes, our

party opposed it and will oppose any such authoritarian attack against democratic movement. We can assure Mr. Basu and his party that our opposition to authoritarianism is not verbal but concrete.

May we remind Mr. Basu that did he not boastfully claim after this 'operation' that 'firmness pays'? Is this claim consistent with his present complaint against our party? Is he trying to be democratic? Has he forgotten that after the laudatory comments he received from the bourgeois circles, he even promised betterment of power service. Has it come about? So, even though he confesses now that he could not gauge the dimension and complexity of the problems, about one thing he seemed to be sure that 'firmness pays'! But this firmness was applied not against the contractor-bureaucrats clique, vested interests but against the workers of a union not favoured by him and his party. Splended!

One thing is to be noted that Mr. Basu and his government tried to make the workers of a particular union the scapegoat for the power crisis. For this, they set the engineers against the workers by picking up a case. Now when the engineers are on movement the 'Left Front' Government and CITU leadership are trying to set the workers against the engineers. Behind this game, goes the deeper conspiracy of maintaining the power crisis. Otherwise how is it that the monopolists who raised, so much hue and cry in 1967 on the issue of 'gherao' are now showering praises on the 'Left Front' Government despite acute power crisis, which should have been a cause of serious concern for them? Is it because of the reason that they are using the plea of power failure for lay-off on a massive scale, locking out of industrial units etc? In normal times, such acts would have met with strong reactions from the workers. Faced with acute crisis of market, the

(Contd. to Page 8)

Soviet Revisionism fishing in troubled water from its hegemonistic desire

(Contd. from Page 3)

compromising in their character.

Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, one of the outstanding Marxist-Leninist thinker of the era, in his invaluable lessons has left for us an illuminating analysis on the character of the bourgeoisie in the existing period of reactionary moribund capitalism.

Once the bourgeoisie when it emerged as a progressive social force, upheld democracy fought uncompromising struggle against blind faith, fanaticism, dogmatism, obscurantism, absolutism, and all sorts of social injustice. It was then more attached to liberty and democracy. But soon, following the course of history with the establishment of their exploitative class rule, they became out and out reactionary, reformist oppositional and compromising in character. In fact they became more attached to militarism and bureaucracy. To arrest growth of revolutionary thoughts and ideas in the society, they took refuge in all orthodox, reactionary dogmatic, mystic spiritual and obscurantist ideas. So necessarily their attitude towards imperialism and imperialist forces also underwent a thorough change. The same bourgeois class which once encouraged anti-imperialist liberation struggles in different countries came closer to the imperialists and established a tie with them on the basis of a common capitalist class interest. No doubt they at times pose opposition to them also. But this is mostly for some gains or concessions in the economic field.

What Comrade Ghosh taught us is a historical truth equally applicable to the bourgeoisie of all countries. The Iranian people have themselves experienced this change in attitude to the imperialists in case of bourgeoisie of

their own country. Their memory is not so short as to forget the fact that in the early '50s, Dr. Mussadeq, the then leader of the Iranian bourgeoisie himself a liberal, though with a limited object of freeing the country's oil resources from the clutches of the imperialist forces, fought an uncompromising struggle against them that ultimately cost him his life. But since then hardly twenty five years have passed, their anti-imperialist character has completely, exhausted and instead reflect a conciliatory, a compromising tone, in their attitude towards the US imperialists.

At times it might appear, and more particularly so, centring round the hostage issue that perhaps Khomeini was uncompromising in his attitude towards the US in contrast to the compromising tone of these bourgeois leaders who were in the helm of affairs of the state.

But if any one reads between the lines of the news published in the press then he will find that the posing of such differences in their attitudes is a part of their tactical manoeuvre to hoodwink the people who possess a deep anti-US feeling, so that they may maintain their common bond of interest with the US imperialists with whom they possess a basic class identity.

What they had done—one would say, was rather a division of labour or jobs between themselves. While Khomeini took the responsibility to pose a militant and reflect an uncompromising tone to the US, so as to keep pace with people's sentiment and feeling, those who were in the official positions in the state and government, by posing as if that persons in the office must behave as 'responsible' beings, in reality were protecting their common tie and identity of class interest with the US.

To give credibility to

his dramatic role of a militant, Khomeini was ready to adopt even means befitting only the worst type of bourgeois politicians.

His declaration that the new parliament would decide the fate of the hostages, was in fact a "head I win, tail you lose", tactics,—a double edged sword, whatever way it cuts—cuts to the interest of its owner.

Thus if the parliament would ultimately vote to free the hostages, Khomeini could endorse the decision as a popular vote, use this leverage upon the students and would come out with his image untarnished. If the decision was otherwise Khomeini would still then have a political way to rally to the winning side.

Not only that Khomeini was trying to contain the militancy of the movement, thereby arresting its growth in the right track, he had some deeper intentions too.

He is fanatically against democratisation of the society. To prevent that, his first and foremost task after emerging as the Father figure of the nation, was to turn back to the medieval age in social mores and ideology.

The steps and measures that were taken under his guidance clearly manifested his blind, fanatic religious bid to fire the clock back for all time.

In his bid to keep the people alienated from progressive thoughts and ideology, he was prescribing opium to them.

So, this is the tragic end of a struggle that once developed with immense possibilities and potentialities.

Perhaps one will not err if he concludes that the Iranian tragedy lies in the fact that there a possible revolution has gone away.

Iran becoming the play-ground of super powers

And what one generally apprehends in such a

tragic situation is actually happening in Iran.

Both the US and the Soviet revisionist leadership are trying to transform the country into an amphitheatre for the performance of a drama of super power politics.

One can understand the role of the US imperialists, who are keen in protecting their imperialist interest in Iran. But what role, is the Soviet leadership playing in Iran?

When it is the bounden duty of revolutionaries of all countries to back and help in all possible ways such a mighty people's upsurge pregnant with immense revolutionary possibilities, so that it may reach its logical culmination, the Soviet leadership is found to be engaged in fishing in troubled water for fulfilling their hegemonistic aspiration.

Once they had to pay much for their wrong politics when Sadat went over to the US camp. Since then they have been seriously striving for a foothold in the middle east.

So after their successful manoeuvre in Afghanistan, they, in their bid to extend their spheres of influence are trying to penetrate in Iran. To achieve their desired goal, they are trying to take advantage of the present political turmoil and particularly the strong anti-US feeling persisting in the country.

Previously they too like US maintained a good relation with the Shah. But seeing the way the tide was turning in Iran, they started wooing even a religious Zealot like Khomeini and declared support for his 'revolution', whose only object was to hit at the very backbone of the struggling people and nip in the bud all their progressive and democratic hopes and aspirations. To pose an 'ally' of Iran they vetoed the UN Council resolution on Iran and with western countries deciding to cut their trade with Iran they came forward with their promise of economic aid. They also offered tranship-

ment facilities for goods for Iran across Soviet territory in the event of US blockade of Iran.

In fact the hostage crisis has proved invaluable to the Soviet revisionist leadership. All the signs point to the said leadership wanting it to continue as long as possible.

The activities of their Iranian disciple i.e. the Tudeh party also point to the same fact. The said party remained discredited for a long time for its naked pro-Sovietism. In the initial stage of the movement, when the people broke out into mighty upsurge against the Shah they played no significant role. But as soon as Khomeini emerged to power and the situation apparently went against the US, particularly centring the US hostages, they proclaimed unconditional support for the religious leader even though the latter came down heavily on the 'leftist' militants.

Even reports are there that to serve the interest of their mentor the Soviet revisionist leadership, they have infiltrated among the militants holding the hostages and striving hard to keep alive the hostage issue as long as possible.

Apart from their interest of bringing Iran within their spheres of influence the Soviet revisionist leadership perhaps have other interest too. It is a fact that they have earned such discredit and condemnation among the people of Middle East in particular their military intervention in Afghanistan. They hope that so long political scene will remain volatile in Iran, the world people's attention will remain diverted from Afghanistan.

The Iranian bourgeoisie however, although their pragmatic interest has pushed them towards the Soviet revisionist leadership for economic aid, appears to have become cautious regarding the danger of Soviet hegemonism after the incidents

(Contd. to page 7)

Failure to reach the logical culmination of the Iranian people's struggle reveals crisis of leadership

(Contd. from page 6)
in Afghanistan. On many occasions they have given expression to it.

Iranian people will have to foil the game of superpowers and the national bourgeoisie

We hope that the Iranian people are fully conscious of the danger that Soviet hegemonism poses before their revolution. The fighting people of Iran as a part and parcel of the world people must note that while the US imperialism is the main enemy of world revolution, the Soviet revisionism is its main danger.

They must fight tooth and nail against these forces so as to free their country from collusion and contention of super powers for imperialist or hegemonistic domination and also the presence and interference of the other imperialist powers in the internal affairs.

The toiling people of Iran must note that though their struggle has received a temporary setback, all are not lost for ever. They have manifested mighty vigour, tremendous sacrifice and sense of dedication. They have broken down the walls the longstanding prison house of the mighty Shah.

Even now what a tremendous fighting spirit and undaunted zeal they are manifesting in a most critical situation of their country.

The country's economy is in tottering condition—productivity is woefully low, commerce is reduced to trickle. There is little or no new investment. Construction is at stand still. Unemployment is on the rise. Heavy shortage of essential goods all around in the country. The situation has become far more critical following the freezing of Iranian gold and other assets in the US banks.

But still all these have

failed to dampen their undaunted fighting spirit. Such a people must win their battle.

But to achieve that victory they require to fulfil certain tasks. They must note that to reach their desired goal they will have to give their struggle anti-capitalist direction. Because, when the national bourgeoisie in state power, it is only by achieving anti-capitalist socialist revolution that they can overthrow the bourgeois class rule and bring about an end to their present social condition.

Oppositional-reformist bourgeois leadership is the main obstacle before the struggle of Iranian people

The main obstacle that stands in their way is the bourgeois leadership and the fanatic, orthodox, obscurantist forces that still play a dominant role in their struggle. They must note that the bourgeois leadership is deceiving them and betraying their struggle. This has been once again confirmed on the hostage issue. It is a fact that this issue has revealed how deep is the anti-US imperialist feeling of the Iranian people. The bourgeoisie however is trying to utilise it in their own class interest. There is a positive attempt on their part to divert the attention of the people from their main object of struggle. This apart they desire to use the hostage issue as a leverage on both the super powers so as to increase their bargaining power before them. While playing with the hostage issue they are of course careful so that the anti-US feeling of the people may not develop much as to go out of their control. This is obvious from the occasional critical tone that some of the leaders reflect against the students holding the hostages.

The Iranian people

must note that such a leadership, which is out and out reactionary and reformist-oppositional in character and suffers from the fear complex of revolution can never lead their struggle to an end which can be achieved only by overthrowing the bourgeois class rule.

It is only the genuine revolutionary working class leadership that can lead such a struggle to its logical culmination.

The question of leadership is of paramount importance in any struggle. Many a struggle of the fighting people in different countries, in spite of their tremendous sacrifice and dedication has met a tragic end due to the crisis of leadership.

The tasks before the revolutionary and progressive forces of Iran

So, to achieve their object one of their primary tasks is to substitute the bourgeois leadership by an ideologically matured, organisationally strong, genuine working class revolutionary leadership, which will be able to develop the revolutionary struggle on the correct base political line. They must try to build up such a leadership out of their struggle.

Moreover, they must free their struggle from the pernicious influence of all orthodox, fanatic obscurantist forces being encouraged and patronised by the bourgeoisie working within the struggle to make it weak and misdirect its course.

Basing on scientific thoughts and secular human values they must have to struggle hard against these rabid reactionary forces to wipe out their influences from the society. While fighting against these forces they must also fight against the bourgeois conspiracy of spreading decadent Yankee culture in the country so as to cripple the people morally, culturally.

They must note that no

struggle for social transformation can reach its desired end if it is not integrated with the struggle to build up necessary culture, moral and ethics. And if it is done on the edifice of culture, ethics and values free from all sorts of obscurantist, orthodox, fanatic ideas and based on secular and scientific thoughts which, in today's perspective can only be possible on proletarian moral values and ethics, that they will be able to lead their struggle to its logical culmination.

There may be various attempts from within the movement to weaken their struggle and divert it from its main object. They must expose all these reformist and compromising forces, defeat them and protect their struggle.

Many people think that there is sufficient ground to presume that the Iranian bourgeoisie

and Mr. Carter both will try to come to terms on the hostage issue after the elections in their respective countries. Even if they succeed in their game that cannot be the end of the struggle of the Iranian toiling people.

On the contrary that will bring exposure to the treacheries and deceptions of the bourgeois and reformist force and the progressive forces of Iran must try to build up their struggle with new energy and inspiration in the correct track for realising their desired goal.

The sincerity, sacrifice, fighting fervour and dedication that they have so far manifested have convinced all that if they fulfil the tasks necessary to build up their struggle in the correct revolutionary path, then no opposition in the world, however strong, will be able to arrest them.

Ultimate victory will be theirs.

ASSAM PROBLEM

(Contd. from Page 4)

ment by bringing cleavage in the unity of the people fanning up provincial jingoism,—as a faithful agent of the capitalist class. We request the common people and workers and supporters of all the left parties including the CPI(M) leadership to ponder deeply over this.

But why the CPI(M) leadership took this course? The reason is that they have left not only the path of mass struggle but to make their position secured in the parliamentary politics they are trying to build up on all India plane an understanding with Indira Congress, however much anti Indira slogans they shout outwardly, and they have made quite some advance to that end. By this they have dealt a heavy blow to the left and democratic movements at present but it is the exploited people who will have to pay for it in full.

We believe that if all the left and democratic forces come forward

unitedly without further delay in the greater interest of the struggle for emancipation of the exploited people and step in the right direction giving up petty party sectarian interest then the conspiracy of the reactionary forces in Assam can be effectively thwarted even now. From this approach our Central Committee sent an appeal to all the all India left parties proposing to develop a united movement throughout India embracing people of all strata against the Central Government led by Indira Gandhi on the following demands; a) stop deportation of non-Assamese people from Assam b) ensure full security to the minority people c) fulfil the legitimate demands and aspirations of the Assamese people d) defeat the parochial and divisive forces.

Even before this, long before these divisive forces could raise their ugly heads, the Assam State Committee of our Party time and again appealed (Contd. to Page 8)

PRESS CLIPPINGS

Co-operation with Left Front

—Congress (I)'s political strategy

Calcutta, May 13 :

The political situation in West Bengal has undergone a distinctly qualitative change in the last few days following the Left Front's call for a 'Bengal bundh' to protest the Assam agitation and the State Congress-I's decision to extend total support to it.

The bundh scheduled for May 17, will be organised by the Left Front if the student agitators in Assam carry out their threat of deporting 'foreigners' from May 15. From all indications, the Assam agitators are firm and thereby the bundh is likely to be a total, united one, a development which has special significance in the politics of the state which, only the other day, was gripped with tension as a result of confrontation politics between the CPI(M)—dominated Left Front and the Congress (I).

This sudden shift in the stance of the state Congress (I) is in sharp contrast to the Assam blockade movement launched by the party in the last week of March. The movement, even though it did not gather momentum, injected enough fear in the Left Front government and there was a feeling that the blockade was the beginning of a toppling game.

The new stance of the Congress (I) has led to confusion among the Left parties as to what is the real intention of Mrs. Indira Gandhi. The Left Front committee is meeting here on May 15 to review the situation in the context of the proposed bundh and naturally the question will come up as to what will be the nature of cooperation with the Congress (I) on the Assam issue and what is going to

be its net impact on the politics of the state.

In fact, the olive branch offered by the Prime Minister to the CPI (M) is based on a number of calculations which fit in with her strategy. The State Congress (I) is still riven by factions and all efforts till now to give it a cohesive shape have yielded no results.

.....the local industrialists, most of whom had been supporting Mrs. Gandhi even when she was out of power, definitely influenced Mrs. Gandhi against taking any precipitate step in West Bengal at the advice of the local Congress (I) leaders.

The industry people, notwithstanding the power crisis and consequent loss of production, have been able to establish a good equation with the state government especially Mr. Basu, and they generally want to complete its full term. In fact, the president of a local industrial association openly offered at its annual general meeting to act as a bridge in establishing rapport between the Left Front government and the Centre.

In fact, the big units have not suffered in any way under the CPI (M)-dominated government and it is in their interests to have good rapport with

the state government, the constituent parties of which dominate the overwhelming majority of the working class.

For the Prime Minister, the intelligence reports which she has been getting from the North-Eastern states about the involvement of foreign agencies must have weighed sufficiently with her to bring Mr. Basu on her side on the Assam issue.

Mrs. Gandhi has to take some harsh decisions regarding Assam and some other North-Eastern states after the assembly elections and she needs the support of the leading political party of the eastern region, the CPI(M). If she can bring about some solution to the vexed issue of 'foreign nationals' even at some 'cost' it will go in favour of the Congress (I) in West Bengal and Tripura.

But all this depends on whether the entente between the CPI (M) and the Congress (I) which has emerged now is on a short-term tactical basis or the Prime Minister has finally taken a decision to allow the Left Front government to run its full term. For the CPI (M) leadership, any understanding that the governments of West Bengal and Tripura will not be disturbed is always welcome but if the political cost becomes too heavy, that may trigger off tensions in the party ranks.

The Economic Times,
May, 14, '80

Jyoti Basu's angry outbursts

(Contd. From Page 5)

monopolists want to pass the buck by reduction of work force. Power crisis is providing them with a convenient excuse. The government's behaviour in the perspective of all this becomes suspect.

We are sorry, Mr. Basu

and his party may take a hostile attitude to our party for this reading and observation but it would be better if they try to meet the most relevant questions we have raised here, fairly and squarely. Angry outbursts or invectives will not help them.

Assam Problem

(Contd. from Page 7)
to all the left parties including the CPI(M) to build up united movement of the broader sections of the masses on various democratic demands of the people—but they all turned deaf ears to our proposal. Responding to our appeal, had they come forward, then the reactionary divisive forces could not have led the people to such an appalling situation. However, whatever might have happened in the past, we still hope that the left parties including the CPI(M) will, at least now, become conscious of the gravity of the situation, respond to our appeal and come forward.

To the common people it is our appeal that they must realise the situation that has developed in Assam does not concern only the people of Assam and West Bengal—it has assumed an all-India character. Not only the non-Assamese people living in Assam will be affected but as a result of this, parochial and divisive tendencies will fast spread in other states of India too which will shatter to pieces even the little unity of the exploited masses

that has developed through mass movements over long years. The Assamese people will also have to realise this. They too will have to realise that even to achieve their legitimate demands what is essential is to forge unity among different sections of the toiling people and to develop a powerful movement against the Indira Government at the Centre. And they are to preserve this unity as the apple of eye. Being misdirected by the reactionary forces, the path they have chosen to evict the non-Assamese people cannot even touch the fringe of their problems. Rather, the tremendous hatred and feeling of disunity this will generate among different sections of downtrodden people will weaken their legitimate movements too and strengthen the hands of none other than the reactionary forces. It is our earnest appeal to the people of West Bengal who have long tradition of conducting militant struggles—please do not make any such move, guided by blind emotions which will only help the reactionary forces to carry through their evil design.

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